

FROM:

Rositzke paper/OSO Files

CLANDESTINE INTELLIGENCE VERSUS THE USSR

Post-war reorientation of clandestine collection activities was painfully slow in recognizing the USSR as the primary target and making proportionate allocation of planning, personnel, and assets. "Absence of continuous leadership at the OSO and DCI levels made it easy to avoid facing the problem." From the creation of OSO in 1946 to 1949, responsibility for operations in this field lay in the peripheral geographic divisions. The first beginnings of directing specific and specialized attention to the USSR was the creation of a special staff unit in 1946 which was charged with providing guidance on International Communism and Soviet Intelligence to the operating divisions. From June, 1946, to July, 1947, this unit, SPD-S(oviet), performed this function and also began the build-up of a file of Soviet officials as reference material for future operational plans. In the first organization chart drawn up by SO, which was incorporated in SODir #7, 4 December '46, this division was included among the miscellaneous units of the office, and its chief's assignment given as: "with respect to the USSR, to perform the duties of a foreign division chief." The ambiguity in this terminology lay in the fact that the division did not come under any of the foreign branches, which were the units clothed with operational responsibility in the field.

In the reorganization of the office of 6 June '47, this division was elevated to branch status, being included in the roster of geographical branches as FBS, defined as the North Eurasian Branch. In this status it continued the same functions and added to them the

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collection and analysis of operational intelligence on the USSR. In concept at this time it was an incompletely developed branch, engaged in planning and focussed on future operations.

One operation was undertaken during this period, mounted from one of the peripheral geographic areas nd ~~as~~ described as "abortive."

On 1 August '48, ADSC approved a program for FBS which included assignment of 15 case officers to the branch, but no final action~~x~~ resulted. By April, 1949, the strength of the unit stood at 5 part-time operations officers overseas, in Europe, the Near East, and the Far East, and 17 total strength at Headquarters. Later that year it was recommended that operational responsibility for the target area involved be assigned to a single division. This step was formally approved on 29 December '49, by SODir #18/11, "Responsibility for Operations into the USSR", and FDS became an operating division in fact on 1 February '50. Much of the impetus for this most important single forward step came from other IAC Agencies, notably the Air Force, which during 1949 reoriented their major intelligence effort to almost complete emphasis on the USSR, which in turn put increasing pressure on OSO for cutout of intelligence on the USSR both from covert collection and from exploitation of defectors.

Comparative rapid growth followed. Under a new table of organization and a relatively large budget, personnel strength grew in May, 1950, and in September, 1951, the largest overseas base increasing Prospects of success in actual penetration operations into the target area were extremely slim. Nevertheless, of half a dozen specific undertakings during 1950 and 1951, at least

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one achieved tangible results, including exfiltration of substantial documentary material.

In May, 1951, consolidation of the overseas bases of the two covert offices was authorized, and in September the headquarters echelons of the SR Divisions of the two covert offices were merged, bringing together a total strength approximately half of these Russian-speaking.

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